

### **This I Believe.....Being Thankful For What You Have**

“It is always wise to stop wishing for things long enough to enjoy the fragrance of those now flowering.” –Patrice Gifford. I am materialistic, maybe with a hint of greed, so much that I sometimes forget about the things that I should be grateful for. But after that one experience, my perspective on my life has completely changed. I realised that I should treasure the things I have now, appreciate them, and fully understand just how fortunate I am.

I strongly believe that everybody should be thankful for what they have instead of wishing for something more as there are definitely people who are more disadvantaged than you. No matter how bad you think your situation is, there will always be someone who is worse off. I do complain about not having things that I want, but then I think about those families who are worrying about where their next meal is going to come from, and I think, who am I to complain?

I have heard many stories about the poor and disadvantaged people in many parts of the world. However, I never really understood or realised their suffering, until I saw a small part of it for myself. In Taiwan for example, there will be beggars who line the street, cupping a bowl in their hands, hoping that someone will be kind enough to spare some coins so that they might get to eat a hot meal that day. One scene that really touched my heart was when I saw this frail old woman. It was about 12 degrees outside and yet she was dressed so thinly that I could hardly believe it actually provided any warmth or protection from the strong winds. She looked so weak, as if a gust of wind would blow her away. She was hunched over, trying to shield her face from the desolate winds, but her trembling hands held a small wooden bowl. It was empty. When I walked past her, she lifted her eyes and stared at me. Her eyes were cold and distant, as if she was detached from this world, but worst of all, they were devoid of any hope.

It really made me comprehend how lucky I was to have enough to eat, live in such a prosperous country as Singapore and have a roof over my head, where I am protected and sheltered. Yes, I may not be very rich, but I have enough and I realised that I should be content with what I have. Compared to the poor and disadvantaged, I am so much more fortunate. That experience really taught me to treasure the things that I have, a good education, something which so many children in other countries lack, and a loving family and friends, which are the simply joys that life provides us with. All this probably sounds very cliché, but this is what I believe in and this is what comes from my heart.